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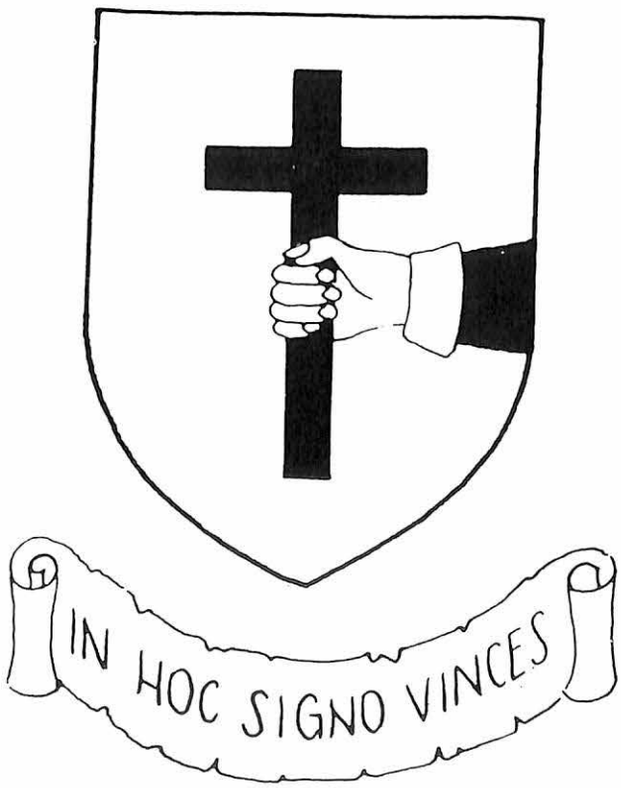
Ó Domhnaill Abú



O Donnell Clan Newsletter No. 7

Spring 1987

First Irish Australian of the Year was born in Dungloe

The distinction of becoming the first recipient of the Irish Australian of the Year award has been bestowed on a native of Dungloe, Mrs. Nancy O'Donnell.

The president of Irish Week Australia, Mrs. O'Donnell (46) emigrated to Australia sixteen years ago when her husband Neil, a national school teacher, was offered a teaching position with the New South Wales Department of Education. For the past 14 years she has worked with an insurance company in data control and since arrival in Australia and she has worked tirelessly promoting Ireland. She was the most popular of the many candidates for the Irish Australian of the Year (1985-86) Award sponsored by the Irish Association of Australasia.

Nancy, who now lives in Sydney, has served on many Irish Committees including The Gaelic Club, The Irish Civilian Relief Association, The Irish National Association of Australasia, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Irish Week Australia and The Irish Heritage Radio Programme.

While serving on the Gaelic Club Committees she gave of her time unselfishly over and above her duties and during Christmas 1979 it was a pleasure to enter the Irish Club in Sydney and see how lavishly she had decorated it.

In The Irish Civilian Relief Association she was one of the leaders and organisers of The Easter Monday Concert at The Opera House from 1973-1977 and she also was highly involved in the Bloody Sunday Concert held at Glebe in March 1972 — proceeds going back to the families in Derry.

She has served on The Irish National Association of Australasia Committee for many years.

Since the revival of The St. Patrick's Day Parade she has given of her time, ideas and organising ability. During her involvment with the parade, she has served in the positions of Secretary, Vice-President and President. She now holds the position of Patron of the Parade.

Irish Week Australia was a dream which she has brought into reality and since she has established it in 1984 she has endeavoured to bring the Irish to the forefront, not only in Sydney and in New South Wales but now Australia wide.. In doing so she has also endeavoured to bring the Irish people and Associations together in unity. The Irish Week awards are also another idea which she brought into reality and in doing so involved other Irish organisations in running the Awards thus keeping them the sole property of Irish Week.

For over three years now she has carried most of the responsibility for The Irish Heritage Radio Programme. The programme is now the recognised voice of the Irish Community in Sydney, New South Wales, with an an extremely large listening audience.

While in Ireland on holidays in 1985 she was still working to promote the Irish in Australia and as a guest on The Mike Murphy Show capably did promote all forms of Irish Heritage down-under. She went further and contracted with RTE Radio to purchase "The Best of the Week" from RTE for The Irish Heritage Radio Programme — the finance for this purchase coming from her own resources.

Still not content she organised that The Aer Lingus Musical Society visit Australia during Irish Week '86 — another idea and dream which has become a reality.

Overall, she has made numerous inroads with politicians in Government Departments at Federal, State and local level on behalf of The Irish Community. She is also in continuous contact with Ireland, promoting the Irish Activities down-under. Her work for charity is also well known to her friends — work which she keeps at a very private level.

Emperor Franz Joseph

Maximilian (59)

Joseph (44)

Fuadach Aodh Rua

"Ó triallaigh liom ar bhord na loinge,"
Arsa an captaen béalbhinn bréagach.
"Tá ár dtéad go teann, faoi bhruach na mbeann,
Ar ucht Loch Suilt céimigh.

Tá an bhroinn lionlán d'fhíon na Spáinne,
Céad oigtsead mór is tuilleadh,
Den digh is measúla i gcúirt an rí,
Beoir chrotúil chaoin gan mhilleadh.

Agus ólfaidh muid tocshláinte
As cornaibh óir ar aon.
Is beidh againn tamall cuideachta,
Nach gcosnaíonn duitse pingin."

Thaitin comhrá an bhithiúnaigh
Go hansa le Aodh Rua.
Agus ar bhord na loinge, chuaigh sé amach,
Mo chreach agus mo mhíle trua.

Ba tapaidh 'shiúil na bomaití
I measc imirtis is óil,
Ollghairdeas agus carthanas
Is mórán gléasraí ceoil.

Cuireadh agus freagrafodh ceisteanna
Os cionn na ngloiní lán,
Fán bhuaireamh ins an bhaile againn,
Agus gníomharthaí thall sa Spáinn.

Agus na bristí fuilteacha a throidfí
Sula mbeadh duilliúr úr ar chrann,
Idir an bhanríon bhródúil Isibéal
Agus an Spáinneach uasal teann.

Agus nuair a ba mhian lenár gceannfort óg,
A bheith ag dul chun an bhaile a luí,
Chuala a chluasa an tormán,
A bhain léimneach as a chroí.

Bloic agus rópaí callánach',
Ag cur seolta geala ar chrainn,
agus garbhghuth na mairnéalach
Ag déanamh gealgháire agus grinn.

Is an long ina rith ar bharr na dtonn
Ag teitheadh roimh an tsíon,
Agus ba domhain amach san fharraige í
Nuair a nocht anlos an ghrian.

Ba tiubh a threabh sí a bealach
Thart timpeall Chontae an Dúin,
Agus arís gur leag sí a hancaire
Tráthnóna trasna an chuain.

Tá mac Inlon Duibh go huaigneach
Anocht, i mBaile Átha Cliath,
A leaba lom ina leacacha,
Gan bhiotáille gan bhia.

Ach ainneoin é a bheith ceangailte
Le slabhraí fuar' go teann,
Tá ar namhaid nimhneach lagchroíoch,
Le eagla roimh a lann.

Ainneoin ballaí arda agus bábhúin,
Slabhraí fuara agus glais lámh,
Agus airm tréan an gharda,
Á fhaire oíche is lá.

Ach bhí cairde i measc an namhad,
Lán carthanais is dáimhe,
A d'fhág Aodh is a chomrádaithe
Ina bhfir saora ins an tslí.

Bhí ábhar bróin i nDún na nGall,
An oíche a fuadaíodh Aodh,
Ó Rath Maoláin síos an loch,
Agus amach thar Ard Dún Rí.

Ach tá ábhar bróin inniu go fras
Ag Sasanaigh agus ag a gclann,
Nuair atá ár bprionsa óg sa bhaile againn,
Ag cur faobhair ar a lann.

Is moch amárach a chluinfear,
Ó mhullach cnoc agus gleann,
Guth bródúil adharc Thír Chonaill
Ag cur cuireadh ar a clann.

Agus sin an cuireadh a fhreagrófar,
Má freagraíodh aon chuireadh riamh,
Ó chladaí chúil cois farraige,
Agus amach ar ucht na sliabh.

Anonn ó chnoic dhubha Inis Eoghain,
Agus ó ghaineamh bhán na dTuath,
Ó thír chnapánach na mBaoilleach
Go bruach an Easa Rua.

Tháinig siad ina gcéadta,
Fir threánmhar' riamh nár fheall,
Leis na sionnaigh agus na mic tíre
A dhíbirt amach as Dún na nGall.

Mar a scanraigh glam an iolair,
An eanlaith ins na crainn,
Nó tafann toll na conairte
An giorria sa bhinn.

Nó búirtheach leoin na hainmhithe,
As coillte coimhthíocha cúil,
Scanraigh Aodh na rógairí
Agus chuir go léir faoi smacht.

Agus dá nglacfaí a chomhairle an oíche sin,
Roimh an bhriseadh bhrónach mhall,
Bheadh athrú dlí inniu againn,
Ó Chionn tSáile go Dún na nGall.

CLANN DALAIGH
1600 to the present

THE AUSTRIAN LINE

by V. O'Donnell

Calbhach Dubh's (31) third son, HENRY (37), born May 1726, joined his Larkfield cousins in Austria in 1742. He served in the army where on account of his courage and military skill he won rapid promotion and many rewards. 1763 found him Colonel of No. 41 Plunequette Infantry Regiment. Four years later he was in command of the O'Donnell No. 5 Cuirassiers. He retired in 1771 with the rank of Major General.

Henry was over six feet tall, red headed and reputed to have been the most handsome man in the Austrian Army. He was a great favourite at Court, especially with the Empress, at whose bidding he married Leopoldine, daughter of Prince Jean Rudolf Kantacuzene. Marie Theresa gave the bride a dowry of three estates in Galicia and led her to the altar in Bratislava on her wedding day.

The title of a German Count was granted to himself and his heirs by the Habsburgs (German Emperors of the time) on account of Rory's Earl-patent granted by James I.

Major General Count Henry O'Donnell died in Galicia on 4th August, 1789. He had four sons: Joseph (44), John (44a), Charles (44b), Henry (44c) and one daughter, Julie.

JOHN (44a) 1762-1828 entered the army at an early age and achieved the rank of Major by 1804. A great student of history and art, he received an Honorary Membership of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. He became Imperial Chamberlain, Commander of the Royal Bavarian Max Joseph Order, and Knight of the Royal Spanish Order of Charles III. He married Caroline Countess Clari-Aldringen but left no issue.

CHARLES (44b) was killed, as a Major, at the storming of the Bridge of Kehl in 1796. He was unmarried.

HENRY (44c) was also in the Austrian Service and died without issue.

JOSEPH (44), the first son of Major General Count Henry, was born in 1755. He received his early education at the Theresien Academy from which he passed to the Law School of Gottingen University. After graduating he held many important positions. He became a Privy Councillor and was made Governor of Carinthia. While serving as Minister of Finance, he saved Austria from bankruptcy during the Napoleonic War. He was awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of St. Stephen for this performance.

He died suddenly in May, 1810. He was married twice - first to Theresa, daughter of General John Count O'Donnell (122a) (Larkfield Branch) and secondly to Josephine Geisruck (sister of Cardinal Archbishop of Milan).

The first son of the family was

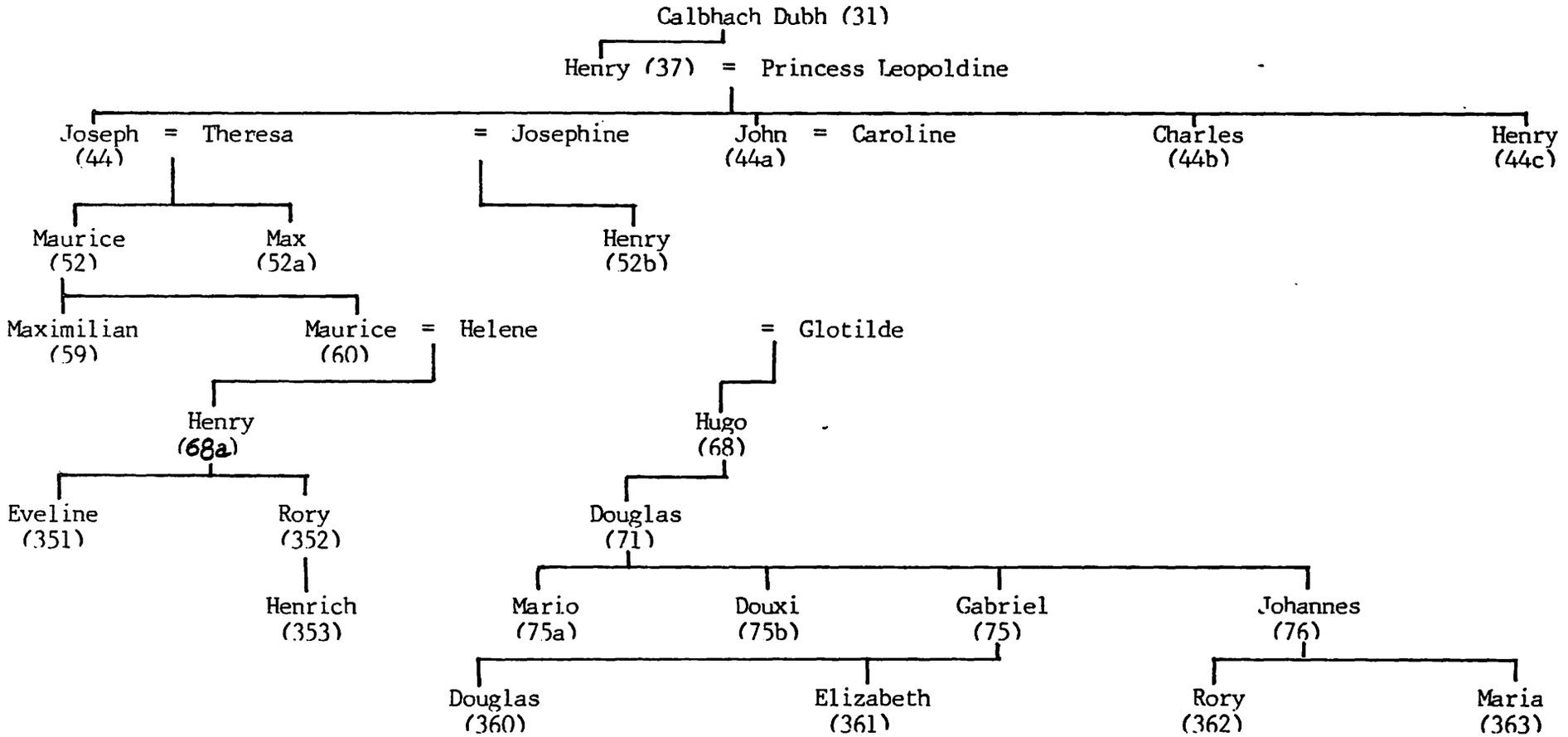
MAURICE (52) born in Vienna in 1780. He had a distinguished military career, participating in many battles and retiring with the rank of Lieutenant General. He was a friend of the fabulous Madame de Stael, whose attention embarrased him greatly.

He married Christine, daughter of the Prince de Linge, a noted beauty of her day. They had two sons and two daughters. Maurice died in Dresden in 1843.

His eldest son, Maximilian (59) 1812 - 1895, was the most famous of the Austrian O'Donnells. He was born in Vienna, educated in Dresden and entered the army at a young age. Having participated in engagements all over Europe he gained many awards and promotion. He had the privilege of serving as Aide-de-camp to the Emperor, Franz Joseph I, in which capacity he saved the Emperor from assassination. In February, 1853 while strolling on the bastions of Vienna the Emperor was attacked by a man wielding a knife. Due to Max's quick action, the knife only grazed the Emperor's neck. Max soon overpowered the assassin and

AUSTRIAN BRANCH

GENEALOGICAL CHART No. 6
Prepared by V. O'Donnell



help was summoned.

Max was showered with rewards. From the officers of the Austrian Army he received a highly ornamented and inscribed silver shield, now in the Salzburg Museum. He was conferred with the Commander's Cross of the Royal Order of Leopold, and granted the status and dignity of an Austrian Count, for up till this, the title 'Count' held by the family was only by virtue of their Irish nobility. The citation continues:- "and as a further proof of Imperial and Royal grace and favour, we augument henceforth his hereditary and family arms by the insertion of our own initials and shield of our most serene ducal House of Austria; and, finally, the double-headed eagle of our Empire, to be and endured as a visible and imperishable memorial of his proved and devoted services". This was a distinction received by only one other subject ever - Prince Schwartzenburg.

(In the same citation, the surname was erronously spelt as O'Donell, this form has been adopted by the family ever since).
Friendly Monarchs decorated him with orders of chivalry and the cities of Vienna, Prague, Pest, Laibach and others made him a Freeman.

A magnificent Gothic Church, the Votivkirche, subscribed to by the Nobility of Europe, was erected in Vienna as a mark of thanksgiving.

Max was granted a site of a house on the beautiful Mirabel Platz in Salzburg. The mansion, No. 2, still stands today, the only private dwelling on this beautiful square. Alas, it is no longer in O'Donnell hands. Above the door can still be seen the shield bearing the hand-held cross and the double-headed eagle of the Habsburgs.

Max married Franziska Wagner, a marriage that was frowned upon as she was not of nobility.

Max's brother, MAURICE (60) 1815 - 1890, served briefly in the Army and was Chamberlain to the Emperor. He and his heirs were elevated to the Austrian Peerage in 1886 - which document is now the family's title of nobility. The Habsburgs were no longer German but Austrian Emperors at this time. He corresponded with Charles Joseph (57) (Castlebar Branch) as reported in Newsletter No. 5 and received a copy of "The Annals" when first published (another family heirloom). Maurice married twice. Firstly to Helene, Princess Kantakuzena, and secondly, to Glotilde, Countess Hardegg.

HENRY (68a) 1845 - 1907, was the only child from the first marriage. He entered the Army and distinguished himself in the war against the Prussians in 1866. He settled in Hungary having married a Hungarian and had two of a family: Eveline and Rory.

RORY Count O'Donell 1845 - 1946 received on loan many family documents, pictures etc. from Count Douglas (71) but was unable to return them due to a change in the political climate. It is hoped that they might still be recovered. Rory's only son, Heinrich, born 1908 died s.p. in 1932 having visited Ireland once.

We now return to Maurice (60). With his second wife he had a son

HUGO (68) 1858 - 1904 who also served in the Austrian Army where he received several military crosses and other honours. He married Gabrille, daughter of Count von Thurn-Vallesassina-Como-Vercelli. They lived in Schloss Aigen bei Salzburg.

They had a son, DOUGLAS (71), 1890-1970, who entered the Army, fought on the Eastern Front during World War I, was taken prisoner and escaped twice. He was a fine horseman and was reputed to have been the strongest man in the Austrian Cavalry at the time.

He married Elizabeth, daughter of Count Uberacker, and had four sons all of which served in the Army during World War II. They were:

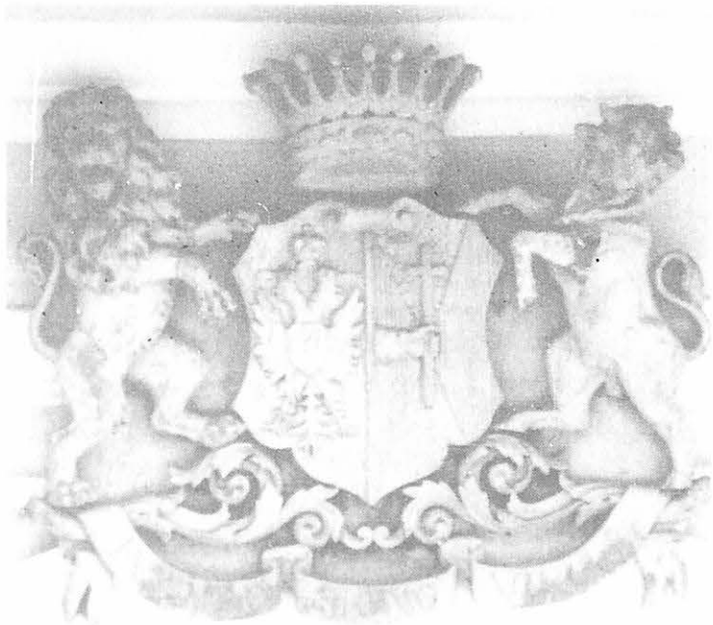
MARIO, born 1920 and died in 1972.

DOUXI, born 1921, Lieutenant with Iron Cross 1st. Class, wounded and missing on

the Russian front since 1943.

GABRIEL (75) Count O'Donell von Tyrconnell, born 1922, head of the Austrian branch today. He visited Ireland several times, last time with his only son, Douglas, when they attended a presentation made to Rupert Coughlan (see Newsletter No. 5). He is married to Ulrike Leeb and has one daugher, Elizabeth. Gabriel is a farmer, a successful businessman and proprietor of a well known wild-life park. He has in his possession many O'Donnell artefacts, such as Maximillian's glove, stained with the Emperor's blood; many portraits of his ancestors; the patent proving their Austrian title and above all, Rory's (13) patent of 1604 (sealed with the great seal of Elizabeth I) on which is given the peace conditions agreed upon after the defeat of Kinsale (see Newsletter No. 2).

JOHANNES (76), Count O'Donell von Tyrconnell, born 1926. He farms on the banks of the Danube near Linz. He is married to Berta Zoite of an Upper-Austrian family and they have two children - Rory, aged 13 and Maria aged 11.



Arms on No. 2 Mirabel Platz

Gabriel (75)

Johannes (76)

Maurice (60)

Hugo (68)

Douglas (71)

MANUS A'PHICE

The story of Manus a' Phice has been told for generations around Donegal firesides and no wonder for he gained a great victory over his enemy under the most adverse conditions. Happening, as it did, at a time when the Gael were being suppressed, it provided much needed inspiration and morale.

Manus O'Donnell was born near Kilmacrennan, Co. Donegal in 1758. He was a descendant of the Inis Saile O'Donnells whose progenitor was Sean, son of Manus Og (6).

Manus was educated for the priesthood, but found the call to arms stronger and eventually became a Captain of the United Irishmen in his own area in 1798. He was informed upon by a spy called McGrath, arrested and jailed in Letterkenny. He was kept for a month, fettered neck and foot in a cold, damp, dark cell with only a piece of bread and a pint of water a day.

He suffered much torture and abuse but would not reveal the identity of his comrades. At one time his cell was filled with hungry rats that actually ate the thongs out of his boots. When his captors failed to extract the information by these means, they tried bribery and promise of protection, but all to no avail.

He was then removed to Lifford Gaol, where after a long time he was brought before a military tribunal under the presidency of Captain Murray. But they failed to convict him due to lack of evidence; McGrath, the principal Crown witness, withdrew his earlier statement for some reason - a matter which caused much embarrassment to the Authorities.

Manus was renowned as a pikeman, and the President now declared he would grant him his liberty if Manus agreed to fight a fully armed and mounted dragoon. Manus accepted the challenge and a day was set.

The contest was arranged in an open field. Manus was warned that he was merely to defend himself and was not to make any attempt at his opponents life, while the dragoon was secretly ordered to kill Manus.

Thousands gathered to witness the contest. Cineall Chonaill prayed and hoped for Manus, for not alone was he fighting for his freedom but he was also defending the honour and dignity of his race and country.

As the dragoon charged towards him, Manus swiftly stepped asideand with a quick flick of his pike cut the horse's reins, thus reducing the rider's control. Next time the dragoon approached, Manus again moved sideways and this time brought his adversary to the ground with his pike.

Manus was immediately apprehended on Captain Murray's orders and condemned to 500 lashes on the triangle. Fortunately for Manus, Lord Cavan, Commander of the Northern Forces happened to arrive on the scene and on hearing the story ordered the prisoner to be set free.

Manus lived a free man till he died in 1844.

A pike was a popular weapon at the time of the United Irishmen. As guns were almost unavailable to the Gael, pikes were manufactured by blacksmiths all over the country. With a 12'-14' shaft, a bayonet-like blade at the end and a curved blade at the side, especially designed for cutting horse's reins, they were quite effective against horsemen as the story demonstrates.

Indeed, shortly after the above incident the Authorities provided their cavalry with chains for attaching to the lower part of the reins that hangs between the horse's neck and the bit.